

Minutes
State Board of Education
Friday, November 15, 2019

The Arkansas State Board of Education (State Board) met Friday, November 15, 2019, in the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (Division) Auditorium. Chair Ms. Diane Zook called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Ms. Zook led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Ms. Diane Zook, Chair; Ms. Charisse Dean, Vice-Chair; Dr. Sarah Moore; Ms. Kathy McFetridge; Ms. Susan Chambers (on phone at 9 a.m.); Dr. Fitz Hill; Mr. Brett Williamson (on phone at 9:50 a.m.); Ms. Ouida Newton; Mr. Chad Pekron (on phone at 9:42 a.m.); Ms. Stacey McAdoo, 2019 Arkansas Teacher of the Year; and Mr. Johnny Key, Secretary

Absent: None

Changes to Agenda

Ms. Zook said the November 14th action item B-13 LRSD Reconstitution had been moved to this meeting and would be heard prior to the regular reports.

Action Agenda

LRSD Reconstitution

Ms. McFetridge said, regarding the Personnel Policy Committee (PPC), that having one PPC representative in each school building would be important. She said this option worked well in the Springdale School District, which is also a large district. Ms. McFetridge said the building representatives would represent the individual cultures of each school. She said the PPC would then share their information with the school board. Ms. McAdoo said there are currently representatives in each building now and asked what would happen to those representatives if there were PPC building representatives. Ms. Zook said that would be school district or school decision and suggested that those representatives be nominated to be a part of the PPC.

Ms. McAdoo noted that the PPC nominations already taken place. Ms. Zook said when the PPC was originally voted on, the State Board members were not aware that they would need to vote on Ms. McFetridge's suggestion to have individual building representation, rather than only eight certified members and three administrative members. Dr. Moore also said that she would support a motion to have PPC representatives in each school building and that eight members is not enough. Mr. Key clarified that the information regarding the size of the PPC was available on the October agenda via the draft PPC proposal dated October 2, 2019. He said that the idea to have individual representation at each building was discussed by the State Board members during the October meeting as well as by the Little Rock Community Advisory Board. However, Mr. Key said there was no vote by the Community Advisory Board to send the recommendation for individual building representative to himself.

Mr. Key asked Little Rock School District Superintendent Mr. Mike Poore to speak to the size of the PPC and the timeline of the nomination process. Mr. Poore said the district did move forward with a recommendation and submitted a proposal to Mr. Key for approval for a PPC with eight certified staff and three administrative staff. He said the nomination process has been completed by the third party company and there have been approximately 250-300 applicants. Per contract agreement, the company was going to release the names of the nominees to the

district at 11 a.m. November 15, 2019. Following the release, there would be vote and the PPC would be in place by mid-December. The plan is that the PPC members would start in January officially. Mr. Poore said the amount of interest people have shown in applying for the PPC has been very positive. He noted that to amend the contract now to expand the PPC to include representation from each building would also be an additional expense on the district for a new contract. Also, he noted the change in contract would mean there would not be a PPC in place by January due to having to restart the nomination process. Ms. Zook said the end of the five years would be January 28, 2020, and there would be time from the State Board's point of view.

Dr. Moore said she would suggest extending the nomination period by a few days to see if there is building representation in each school building in the current 250-300 applications. Ms. McAdoo said that actions such as extending the nomination period is an example of what the community is meaning when they say that they feel the goalposts keep moving and would serve to deepen the distrust the community is currently feeling. Mr. Poore said that he has an issue with extending the nomination period because the third party company would likely need to reopen the application process completely.

Dr. Hill asked Mr. Poore if he felt there would be adequate representation for the whole district with the currently approved structure of the PPC and Mr. Poore confirmed.

Dr. Moore said the communication aspect is her concern regarding a smaller PPC. She thinks it would be better if all schools had a representative that others could speak to face-to-face regarding concerns or requests.

Dr. Hill asked Mr. Poore if everyone was encouraged by the process they have been going through to select a PPC. Mr. Poore said no negative feedback about the process thus far. He also said that he had received no requests for bigger PPC either.

Ms. Dean asked what the process would be if the PPC needed to be expanded later from the three elementary school, three middle school, two high school, and three appointed administrator representatives. Mr. Poore said he spoke to the Fort Smith School District which has a model closely resembling what Little Rock and the PPC would be able to make these decisions when they are creating their bylaws. Ms. McAdoo noted that the current school building representatives could speak to the PPC to voice building level concerns. Mr. Poore said the current design of the PPC will be a good group to start off with in terms of a representative form of government.

Ms. Newton said as a teacher, she can see both sides of this issue. She noted she likes the idea of a larger PPC; however, the process has already started and she does not want to take away the teachers' current excitement level for the current process.

Dr. Hill asked Mr. Poore what his recommendation would be and Mr. Poore said he would stay with the model they are currently working with.

Ms. Zook said based on her discussions with the superintendents of Springdale and Bentonville school districts, she would maintain that a larger PPC would be better.

Dr. Moore said the timeline for the ballot in the draft which the State Board members had voted on was not being followed. Mr. Poore said the timeline was followed and said the school district is on track based on the timeline given.

Ms. Chambers noted that it is important to listen to what the school district wants and thinks is right during this process. She said the size can always be changed going forward if the district feels that representation is inadequate.

Mr. Key said the issue with a local union is not a new issue. He talked about the Pulaski County Special School District in 2011 and said that district had an eight member PPC. Mr. Key said that while there were some disagreements between the superintendent and the PPC that it was a balanced situation and the smaller PPC worked well.

Ms. Zook noted that another item the State Board needed to discuss was the Community Advisory Board (CAB) Ms. Newton moved, seconded by Ms. Dean, to hold a work session to hold discussions on the CAB and MOU. There was some additional discussion. Mr. Pekron joined the meeting via phone 9:42 a.m. and was provided a summary of what was being discussed. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Williamson joined the conversation at 9:50 a.m. and was provided a summary of what was being discussed. In regard to the PPC topic, both Mr. Pekron and Mr. Williamson expressed their preference for a larger PPC.

Ms. McFetridge moved, seconded by Dr. Moore, to expand the PPC representation to one representative in each building. There was additional discussion before the vote and State Board members were given the opportunity to summarize their thoughts on the motion. There was a roll call vote. Ms. McFetridge, Dr. Moore, Mr. Williamson, Mr. Pekron, and Ms. Zook voted yes. Ms. Dean, Ms. Chambers, Dr. Hill, and Ms. Newton voted no. The final vote was 5-4. The motion passed.

Reports

State Board Member Reports/Comments

Ms. Newton said she got to observe two first grade classroom literacy lessons in both a small and a large school district. She said the content was amazing. Ms. Newton said she was initially discouraged because one teacher was doing whole group discussions for everything; however, later found the teacher also has one-on-one sessions with students and already knew the students' needs. For NASBE, she reported that they have been looking at NAEP results and that the organization sent out a call-to-action to highlight the literacy and math issues nationwide. She said the call-to-action was aligned with what Arkansas is doing.

Ms. Dean said the Family and Community Engagement (FACE) team currently reviewing district parental engagement plans for federal and state compliance. She said the FACE team has been doing a tremendous job of going over everything in the plans. Ms. Dean said the FACE team continues to collaborate with the practicum team from the Clinton School of Public Service to create a survey and implementation plan to gather information on ways to increase family engagement across Arkansas. She said the next monthly parent engagement facilitator coordinator meeting is scheduled from November 21 at 2 p.m. Either Kim Wright or Chelsey Moore presented at the Arkansas Public School Resource Center Conference in Hot Springs, the Arkansas Association for Alternative Educators in Arkadelphia, and the Arkansas Nonpublic School Accrediting Association. Ms. Wright and Ms. Moore participated in the State Health Coalition Meeting, the School Readiness Summit, the Communities in Schools Meeting at the Clinton School for Public Service, the Family and Community Engagement in STEM Webinar, and the Engaging Families for Healthier, Happier Students Webinar. Ms. Dean said the School Performance unit recently added a translator, Ms. Kazandra Wilson, to their team. She also noted that Mr. Reginald Ballard was planning to attend the Family and Community Engagement team meeting later in the afternoon.

Ms. McFetridge attended the ribbon cutting at LISA Academy in Springdale.

Dr. Moore attended the NASBE National Association of State Board Conference. She said former State Board member, Dr. Jay Barth, received an award and presented at a session on civic education with a couple of other state representatives at the conference. She said Ms. Newton and Ms. Chambers were also recognized. Dr. Moore said she heard a great session by Mississippi on what their state is doing for literacy and another session by Turnaround for Children about the science of the brain and how that interacts with how students learn.

Ms. McAdoo talked about the constant support she receives from her students and their parents. She discussed her signature poem which she recites at many public speaking events. She said, simply put, the poem is about the power and dynamics of communication connections and the relationship between students and teachers and how public educators are charged with teaching every type of child regardless of the amount of resources they are provided. Ms. McAdoo also discussed her opinions on standardized testing and the labels associated with the scores received. She polled the State Board members to see if any of them had ever dealt with the same traumatic events that she has outside of her contracted time at a school. Ms. McAdoo also said that the State Board cannot use the word "community," if the student, parents, teachers, administrators, and others have had a say in the decision making process.

Ms. Zook said Special Education Public School Program Coordinator Ms. Robin Stripling was recently awarded the Donna Reed Award for Administrators from the Arkansas Council for Exceptional Children. She said the award recognizes individuals whose occupational skills are utilized to serve and promote the welfare of persons with disabilities and whose work has resulted in effective academic educational practices that are developmentally appropriate and individualized for students. Ms. Zook said over 500 teachers and administrators attended the Alternative Pathway to Graduation Trainings at the state's Education Service Cooperatives during the last two months. Curriculum and Assessment team attended meetings in October to discuss issues pertaining to students with disabilities with representatives from other states. She said the Special Education Unit submitted a one percent Alternative Assessment waiver extension request to the U.S. Department of Education on November 1, 2019. Ms. Zook said the Dispute Resolution team held a three-hour training with a question- and-answer component on IDEA requirements for disciplinary actions for students receiving special education services.

Commissioner's Report

Mr. Key invited Assistant Commissioner Ms. Stacy Smith to talk about the \$38 million, five-year literacy grant the Division received from the U.S. Department of Education. She said Arkansas received an initial \$1.1 million to begin implementation of the grant this year. Ms. Smith also said 95 percent of the funds will be subgranted to districts and communities to improve literacy outcomes for students in preschool through twelfth grade. She said 40 percent of the subgrants is designed for elementary schools, another 40 percent is designed for secondary schools, and 15 percent is designed for early childhood education. Ms. Smith said Public School Program Advisor Ms. Amy Counts has been named the program manager for this grant and she is creating an application for subgrants.

Mr. Key invited Director of Communications Ms. Kimberly Mundell to discuss the Schools on the Move campaign. She said the campaign would launch on Monday, November 18, 2019 and will run through March 2020. Ms. Mundell said the goal of the campaign is to celebrate schools that saw positive movement on recent state and federal accountability reports. She said another goal of the campaign is to encourage families and communities to dig into the data for their schools districts on the My School Info website. She explained how to navigate the Division website to find the Schools on the Move webpage (<http://bit.ly/SchoolsOnTheMove>).

New Business

There was no new business.

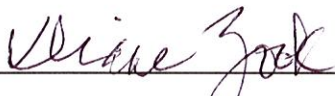
Public Comment

Public comment was heard.

Adjournment

Ms. Dean moved, seconded by Dr. Hill, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 11:18 a.m.

Meeting minutes recorded by Tiffany Donovan



Ms. Diane Zook, SBE Chair



Mr. Johnny Key, Secretary of Education